

Appl. No. 10/673,959
Response dated August 24, 2005
Reply to Office Action of June 9, 2005

IN THE DRAWINGS

Please replace Figures 1 through 3 with the attached formal drawings.

Please add Figure 4. Applicants have included a marked up version of Figure 4 which generally shows the additions to Figure 1. Generally, Figure 4 is a modification of Figure 1 by adding guards 520 and slips 500. Furthermore, box 530 has been added in Figure 4 which schematically indicates the addition of a lubricant to the drill bits. For showing slips 500 recovery apparatus 10 has been raised in elevation.

Appl. No. 10/673,959
Response dated August 24, 2005
Reply to Office Action of June 9, 2005

REMARKS

There are presently 17 claims pending in the case. Claims 1 and 2 were rejected. Claims 3-14 have been objected to, but indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 15-17 have been allowed. Claims 18-23 have been added. Applicants have included a check for \$100 to cover the additional claims fees.

This response is being submitted in order to place the case in condition for allowance.

The drawings were objected to as not showing "the first and second guard, slips and casing joint." Applicants have provided Figure 4 which shows first and second guards 520 and slips 500. No new matter has been included.

Applicants have amended the claims to remove any reference to a "joint" of casing - - now independent claim 3 referring to "section of casing." The term "section of casing" is a broader term than "joint of casing" and can include smaller or larger units of casing than joint.

Applicants have submitted replacement formal drawing sheets for Figures 1-3. Applicants have also added new Figure 4 which is a modification of Figure 1 by adding guards 520, slips 500, and schematically indicating the addition of fluid during drilling by box 530. No new matter has been included.

Applicants have also amended the specification to address the addition of Figure 4.

Claim 5 was objected to because of specified informalities. Applicants have amended claim 5 to address these objections.

Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). For the present applicants have

Appl. No. 10/673,959
Response dated August 24, 2005
Reply to Office Action of June 9, 2005

cancelled without prejudice these two claims. Various dependencies have been amended based on the cancellation of claim 1.

Claims 3-14 were indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants have rewritten claim 3 in independent form and made claims 4-15 depend directly or indirectly on claim 3. Applicants respectfully request that these claims be allowed.

Claims 15-17 have been allowed. Applicants have added new claims 18-24 which depend directly or indirectly on allowed claim 15, and request that newly added claims 18-24 also be allowed.

Support for newly added claims 18 and 19 are found in Figure 3 and the disclosure related to Figure 3 (page 8, lines 9-16).

Support for newly added claims 20 and 21 can be found at page 3, lines 25-30. Figure 4 includes box 530 which schematically indicates the addition of lubricant fluid such as water.

Support for newly added claim 22 can be found in Figure 1 and at page 6, lines 5-6.

Support for newly added claims 23 and 24 can be found in Figure 1 and the disclosure related to Figure 1. (Page 6, lines 12-24).

In view of the amendments of the claims and arguments of counsel, applicant requests reexamination of the application and a Notice of Allowance.

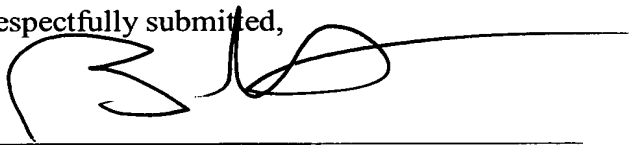
Should the Examiner feel that a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, he is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Appl. No. 10/673,959
Response dated August 24, 2005
Reply to Office Action of June 9, 2005

Applicant respectfully petitions the Commissioner for any extension of time necessary to render this response timely.

Please charge any fees due or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0694.

Respectfully submitted,



Charles C. Garvey, Jr., Reg. No. 27,889
Gregory C. Smith, Reg. No. 29,441
Seth M. Nehrbass, Reg. No. 31,281
Stephen R. Doody, Reg. No. 29,062
Brett A. North, Reg. No. 42,040
GARVEY, SMITH, NEHRBASS & DOODY, L.L.C.
PTO Customer No. 22920
3838 N. Causeway Blvd., Suite 3290
Metairie, LA 70002
Tel.: (504) 835-2000
Fax: 504-835-2070

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on the 27 day of August, 2005.



Brett A. North

